DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 370 480 HE 027 440

AUTHOR LaBare, Martha J.
TITLE Faculty Development for Inclusive Curriculum: Principles and Processes.
PUB DATE 17 Oct 93
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the College Teaching and Learning Exchange National Conference (San Jose, CA, October 13-17, 1993).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Faculty; Cultural Pluralism; *Curriculum Design; Diversity (Institutional); *Faculty Development; Higher Education; Interdisciplinary Approach; *Multicultural Education; Program Descriptions; *Self Evaluation (Groups)
IDENTIFIERS *Bloomfield College NJ; Diversity (Student); *Inclusive Educational Programs

ABSTRACT

Bloomfield College (New Jersey) has encouraged faculty development in inclusive curricula through a faculty development program that guaranteed academic freedom, was begun with faculty members' own reflective practice, and was interdisciplinary and community-wide. This program was a central facet of a larger, institution-wide diversity effort. Each semester for five consecutive semesters a new group of about eight faculty volunteers shared their year-long program. Each group worked in a semester-long interdisciplinary seminar and concurrently began a year of individual study in their own disciplines. Seminars and individual study were guided by a preceptor-in-residence. Faculty also focused on curriculum revision in a week-long summer workshop. Follow-up peer evaluation offered confidential feedback. Faculty found inclusive material and methods intellectual, sound, and renewing. Over half the full-time faculty, plus 20 adjunct faculty and administrators who teach restudied their disciplines for the content and perspectives of race, ethnicity, class, and gender and revised their courses. Revisions affected all levels, disciplines, and many student services. In an institutional self-study students reported being very aware of the changes. Current efforts are aimed at institutionalizing and continuing the work begun in the faculty development project. (JB)

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ED 370 480

Martha J. LaBare
Bloomfield College

Faculty Development for Inclusive Curriculum: Principles and Processes

It's as obvious as *"We can't give what we don't have"*: Curricula can be transformed to be inclusive most effectively by starting with faculty development. When faculty read and reflect on multicultural materials together across their disciplines, they talk also about their students' diversity and their own. When they work with the concrete goal of changing one course's content and perspective, they find that their other courses change, their pedagogy changes and, some say, they themselves change; their goals change. The curricular transformation is then lasting, ongoing, and revitalizing.

At Bloomfield College, faculty development for inclusive curriculum was supported by the New Jersey Department of Higher Education through its Excellence Initiative Grant. This program's institutionalization and evolution have supported the development of an inclusive curriculum and pedagogy; these have been at the center of an institutional transformation. The faculty development program that was the base for this transformation guaranteed academic freedom, began with faculty members' own reflective practice, and was interdisciplinary and community-wide (and included some adjuncts and administrators who teach).

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Background

The program's goal was to realize the mission of the college: To prepare students to function at the peak of their potential in a multiracial, multicultural society. It is a mission in the

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pluralistic tradition of the College since it began as a seminary after the Civil War, educating Hungarians, Germans, Italians, and other ethnic groups, and still recognized in a covenant with the Synod of the Northeast Presbyterian church (U.S.A.). It is a mission shaped by and serving Bloomfield's current student body of 2,000 students, mostly from urban areas of New Jersey; approximately half men and half women; half traditional college age and half adults returning to school; 40% African-American, 40% White, 10% Latino and 10% international students, including great ethnic diversity within these larger groups. With this mission, history and profile, the College has been a good laboratory for change, and is a microcosm of the society to come (Levine, 1989).

From 1989 to 1991 the Excellence Initiative helped Bloomfield expand key programs, create new ones, and link these in a unified project. "Toward a Multiracial, Multicultural Society" was Bloomfield College's Excellence Initiative for the Independents Grant. It supported programs that reached every sector of the campus -- students, faculty, administration, staff -- It supported with programs for Faculty and Curriculum Development, Human Relations, Leadership and Mentoring, Honors, Information Technology, the Arts-as-Catalyst and Visiting Minority Scholars. This network of programs continues to saturate the campus to reach multiple populations in varied ways. Together they have focused the institution on its mission. The program for faculty development for inclusive curriculum was, and is, central.

Faculty Development

The program was built on Bloomfield College's tradition and strong leadership in faculty

development: a standing committee for Development; annual three-day, on-campus faculty development conferences; individual projects focusing on teaching; studies on student learning, through class observation and interviews of students, as in the Master Faculty Program (Katz and Henry, 1988). The coordinator of Bloomfield's Teaching and Learning Center (which continues the work of three-year Excellence Initiative Grant) was for two years director of the statewide Master Faculty Program, and the college president is an author and editor on teaching minority students (Cones, Noonan, and Janha, 1983). With leadership and strong participation, faculty development turned to issues of diversity.

Faculty assumed that "you can't give what you don't have" and therefore approached multicultural curriculum development through faculty development (Green, 1989; Baker, 1983). Starting with the concrete goal to revise or develop one course, they restudied their disciplines for content and perspectives of race, gender, ethnicity, and class. Their exploration and discussions led naturally to an infusion model, in which the whole of curriculum reflects multicultural reality and requires students to use multicultural perspectives in critical thinking (Gaff, 1992).

The program had a staggered start-up schedule, to accommodate faculty's varied commitments and to allow the enthusiasm of each group to recruit the next group. Each semester for five consecutive semesters a new group of about eight faculty volunteers started their year-long program. Each semester the director reviewed the preliminary list of participants and recruited from academic disciplines not represented and invited faculty leaders, to create groups who

would influence further change (Rodgers, 1983).

Each group of faculty worked together in a semester-long interdisciplinary seminar led by a preceptor-in-residence, an expert in issues of diversity from another institution. Readings for the seminars varied with the preceptor-in-residence, and included educational research and theory, sociology, learning psychology, history, autobiographies and novels. Faculty especially appreciated autobiography and fiction, which let them experience directly and together the voices and world views of different cultures. Dialogue in the seminar usually turned to teaching, with faculty working collectively to understand and solve common problems such as student apathy or weak preparation for academic or social demands (Gaff, 1992).

Concurrently with their seminar, faculty began a year of individual study with preceptors in their own disciplines, chosen also for expertise in issues of diversity. In some cases faculty knew (or knew the work of) the scholars in their fields with whom they wanted to work. In other cases, the program director compiled a list of scholars in the bi-state area and wrote letters introducing the college, the program, and the interested faculty member. Then the faculty members contacted several scholars in order to select their preceptors, based on the match to the faculty members' goals and on rapport. In general, preceptors provided bibliographies, guidance for study, and scholarly dialogue. Some faculty met their preceptors weekly, others monthly; a few corresponded. Many of these relationships continue informally. A few faculty members chose to study independently.

After their semester's seminar faculty then focused on curriculum revision in a week-long summer workshop. (While many faculty reported that they tried new materials and methods as they took their seminar, the program design made this optional.) On the first day of the workshop, the faculty presented their own work-in-progress. Faculty had talked about their common readings and their teaching in the seminar, but they had not yet had a chance to present in detail their research in their own disciplines. This scholarly mini-conference was exciting and enriching. Included in the approximately forty presentations over the life of the program were such titles as: "The Big Shots and the Canon: A Multiracial, Multicultural Perspective," "The Politics of Poverty," "Integration of Scientific Racism into Genetics Courses," "Multicultural/Ethnic Verbal Problems for the Developmental Mathematics Curriculum," "Economic Liberty, Economic Rights, and the U.S. Supreme Court," "International Political Cinema," "Patterns in Black English."

Faculty continued their summer workshop by focusing on the review or design of one course each, with review of course goals, experimentation in varying class format and dynamics, exercise's in collaborative learning, syllabus and assignment construction, and evaluation methods (McKeachie, 1983; Bruffee, 1984; Smith and Kolb, 1986). Some faculty taught sample classes for peer critiques. At the end of the workshop week, faculty continued their work on course revisions (or invention) independently or with assistance from their preceptors. In the following semester, as the new/revised courses were taught, faulty observed each other's courses and interviewed each other's students, a practice based upon the Master Faculty Program. This process gave the faculty an analysis of the course-in-progress and support for

the risk-taking that is part of innovative teaching. This was a confidential process, between peers only.

Curricula and Pedagogy

Faculty found inclusive material and methods to be intellectually sound and renewing; the traditional canon to be enriched by multicultural perspectives; the debates about diversity to be themselves subjects for classroom discussion. Their revisions affected the Freshman and Sophomore Cores; courses in the Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Nursing, Natural Science, Math, Business, Accounting, and Economics; tutoring and developmental courses; workshops and services in Academic Support and Student Affairs; library services and collections.

Survey and genre courses now include the contributions and perspectives of individuals and groups outside the mainstream. Examples: Western Civilization is now taught "in World Perspective." American literature and art courses include minority artists, writers and scholarship. Sociology includes multicultural content and examines biases that exclude minority perspective. Developmental mathematics is taught with sensitivity to culturally influenced learning styles and with word problems that reflect the environments students know. The Genetics course includes research on values in science, for example, in intelligence testing and in color heredity. American history courses focus on social history. Tutors are trained to deal with varied learning styles. In library and arts programming, diversity is the norm.

Changes have been reported by faculty not only in curriculum and pedagogy: some faculty say that they themselves have changed. Foreign born faculty report new understanding of American race and ethnicity. Many faculty and staff report new openness concerning students' lives and the expectations they bring to college (Yarbrough, 1992). More faculty are using collaborative learning, are conscious of giving students context for new material, see that issues of diversity can affect teaching in any discipline: accounting, computing, genetics, mathematics.

Students are very aware of the transformed curriculum. In an institutional self-study, a student questionnaire showed that students are getting a multicultural education, that the faculty are dedicated to providing it, that students will be better prepared professionally and personally upon graduation because of it. The students also confirm the success of the curricular transformation as they tell advisors and staff in the Registrar's Office that they want courses that are taught by faculty who went through this program, as they raise questions about diversity issues in their own classes, as they create programming on campus that is based on the openness and inclusiveness of the curriculum. Recently one student spoke for many when she told the group that she was glad that she attends a college that "every day challenges the stereotypes that (she) grew up with." Students' evaluation of the outcomes of the program for curricular transformation confirm those of consultants and external review panels.

Integration and Impact

As indicated earlier, the work is ongoing. The Excellence Initiative provided resources for faculty: released time from one course in the semester of their seminar, a summer stipend for

the workshops, and funds for their own study materials and for new library materials. Naturally a special grant gives an enormous boost to such a program, but institutional faculty development funds can be assigned to support such professional development. Indeed, Bloomfield administrators and faculty have mentored colleagues at conferences and at their home institutions as they adapt this model.

Bloomfield planned beyond its grant's term: The Teaching and Learning Center continues with programs evolved from the Excellence Initiative. Two different groups of faculty meet for ten weeks of each semester for lunch and discussion of multicultural and educational issues. Semi-monthly forums are held on scholarship and teaching. Groups of four to eight faculty work on self-designed projects that deal with writing across the curriculum or with critical thinking across the curriculum. A newsletter further disseminates ideas and innovations.

These programs extend the impact of the Excellence Initiative's core program. In that three-year period, over half of the full-time faculty, plus twenty adjuncts and administrators who teach, restudied their disciplines for the content and perspectives of race, ethnicity, class, and gender, and revised their courses. This community has broadened through the continuing efforts of the Teaching and Learning Center, and has expanded curriculum revision to revision of the general education program, to inclusion in some courses of community service learning, and to holistic assessment. Some faculty followed their work in the seminar with expanded research (an oral history project, research on Islam in New Jersey) and with interdisciplinary, team-taught courses.

Principles, Processes

What principles and processes helped us get this far? Certainly approaching curricular transformation through faculty development. Faculty shaped and owned the program, as well as the curriculum. The guarantee of academic freedom was important. No one presented a check list on how a syllabus should be revised. By dedicating a semester to their reflections and dialogues, before beginning courses revisions, faculty created a community of scholars and teachers prepared to make their curriculum inclusive.

The goal to start by revising one course attracted faculty to the program; however, they report that their studies affected their pedagogy, and thus all of their courses, and that content changed in many courses, not only the one targeted for revision. Having an "outsider" preceptor-in-residence brought new perspectives and meant the seminar's leader was without ties to other campus agendas. Making faculty development interdisciplinary and college-wide created a community of teachers. The strengthening of the community brought about closer relationships between academic affairs and student affairs, between faculty and support staff. Faculty came to know each other by studying together and sharing their hopes and frustrations. They raised their expectations of students, felt more able to take risks, to "teach with courage," in the words of one preceptor.

The staggered start-up schedule accommodated faculty's availability, initiated the program with enthusiastic faculty who became ambassadors, built an ever-increasing cohort focused on multicultural issues. The length and sequence allowed faculty time to reflect, to have a sustained

dialogue with their colleagues, to make lasting change, to be a model of lifelong learning (White, 1980).

Dissemination became a new opportunity for development. Faculty were included in proposals for presenting the program as a model, with their studies, curriculum, and pedagogy as outcomes. At local and national conferences the response of colleagues from other institutions showed faculty the context and value of their accomplishments, and they returned to this small college with additional pride and sense of renewal.

"Preparing students to function at the peak of their potential in a multiracial, multicultural society" unites the college community in its mission and challenges us professionally and personally day by day. Our faculty development program for inclusive curriculum has changed as the curriculum and faculty have changed. Our model of seminars, preceptors-in-residence and individual preceptors, workshops, and peer support and evaluation established a broad and firm base and provided an adaptable model for other institutions. We recommend its intellectual challenge, its collegiality, and its results.

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